

THE HAPPY LOVER

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THE HAPPY LOVER

EVERYMAN'S GUIDE TO
HAPPINESS IN LOVE

BY

DR. G. COURTENAY BEALE

Author of "Wise Wedlock," etc., etc.

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THE HAPPY LOVER

CHAPTER I.

THE VERB "TO LOVE."

THE verb "to love" is the one of all others which every man should learn to conjugate aright.

If not in point of grammar, yet in essence, it is a decidedly irregular verb, and its moods and tenses so many and varied that they take a deal of learning, and almost invite every variety of blunder, whether comic, tragic or merely silly.

And since for all of us happiness depends very largely upon the success we achieve or miss in our handling of this verb—in our management of the big department of life it covers—it will be easily seen why this particular subject is instinctively felt to possess a seriousness and an importance of its own.

To write briefly, sensibly and helpfully on such a topic—to offer a series of directions and reflections which shall assist the reader to achieve the ideal indicated under the title of this little book, *The Happy Lover*—is not an easy task; nevertheless it is one which ought to be undertaken, since this is a subject on which the guidance of a friendly hand is greatly needed.

Indeed, it is the keen sense of the existence of this need, as reflected in hundreds of letters written

to him in perfect sincerity and often in great bewilderment, which has induced the present writer to set about the composition of this manual for men. For years he has been made the depository of innumerable confidences, relating chiefly to problems of married life; and it was more and more borne in upon him that most of these problems need never have arisen, had his correspondents but conducted their love affairs more wisely and more prosperously. To advise the married—to straighten out the tangles, to throw light upon the perplexities, of wedlock—is a necessary office, in whose discharge the author may claim never to have spared his best efforts; but if only the course of love—love as the prelude to wedlock—had been directed with a clearer aim and understanding, there would have been far fewer such tangles, far fewer such perplexities, far fewer heart-aches and heart-breaks. There is an old saying to the effect that a fence or railing at the top of a precipice is better than half-a-dozen ambulances at the bottom, which, being applied to our present subject, means that to prevent mistakes in love is better than to rectify mistakes in marriage later on.

Hence the chapters to which the reader's attention is now earnestly and sympathetically invited.

If love, notoriously, claims such a dominant share in the life of man—and we are speaking, of course, of the love which draws man to woman, woman to man—the reason is that it is so intimately interwoven with our most vital needs, our most imperious urgencies, our lifeward instincts. It does not rest with any normally constituted member of the human

race to say whether he will, or will not, acknowledge the power of this emotion; he is in the grip of the Life Force, and might just as reasonably and just as successfully declare himself immune from the promptings of hunger. That ancient singer who declared that "love is strong as death," understated the case; for love is strong as LIFE, is the most potent manifestation of life itself. Beginning low down in the scale of sentient existence as a crude impulse directed toward the maintenance of the species, and never wholly able to forget its origin, it rises to a height of single devotion, utter unselfishness, unearthly idealism, which makes it the most spiritual of all the passions, and the one which more than any other seems to link man to a higher order of being. Nor can there be any doubt that the happiness we mean when we speak of a happy lover stands in a category of its own; certain it is that the possessor of this kind of happiness, though he may fail in the objects of worldly ambition, though he may have many an imperfection to reproach himself withal, though he may miss wealth and fame, has yet a talisman which will more than compensate him for all his other failures and disappointments.

And on the other hand, the man who has all manner of achievements to his credit, who has won honour and renown and material prosperity, but whom this one supreme joy has passed by, knows in his inmost heart that his life is barren and incomplete, and that none of the world's glittering prizes can make up for what he has missed. We well know that love—even shared and happy love—is not all; it is only that one ingredient whose absence

makes the whole feast of life insipid. The men and women—and there have been many such—who counted the world well lost for love's sake, may not have been the wisest or the most philosophic of the race; they merely expressed in an extreme form a conviction deeper than any argument, and going to the very root and centre of our being.

But while happy love inspires the uttermost content man is capable of experiencing; while the happy lover may be said to have attained to the very summit of human happiness—while there is no cry to which we thrill more spontaneously than that old cry of triumph, "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine"—yet we know but too well that no other passion is the cause of so much suffering, so much downright tragedy. Love unreturned, love misdirected, love ill-rewarded or betrayed, how many dramas, poignant, sordid, terrible, commonplace, hinge on these themes!

From Antony and Cleopatra, from Romeo and Juliet, from Othello and Desdemona—to confine ourselves to Shakespeare's tragic heroes and heroines only—down to the latest every-day instance of honest devotion wasted, careers broken and sacrificed, for the sake of some cheap bit of prettiness; down to a squalid crime, ending one cheerless morning with a double execution—are not examples of *unhappy* love as the sand on the seashore? And is not a passion which can work such multifarious woes one to be dreaded, to be avoided with all our might, if such a thing were possible?

The answer is, of course, quite simply, that it is *not* possible—at least, not without doing ourselves

dire and certain injury in the process; so deeply inwrought is this need in our very fibres. Of one man of genius—Dean Swift—it is indeed on record that he deliberately sought to thwart the power of love within himself; and the success which attended his endeavours was the most pitiful of failures, the ruin of three lives, his own and those of the two women who loved him.

And yet this answer, though true as far as it goes, is not the whole answer to our query. What we would rather emphasise is that for the most part the tragedies and unhappinesses caused by love may be avoided by thought and knowledge, just as they are mainly due, where they do occur, to thoughtlessness and ignorance. "There is no darkness but ignorance," exclaims Shakespeare's Malvolio, and a good deal of the ignorance that gives rise to these sufferings and misadventures need not exist, and may be removed; while for the thoughtlessness and recklessness with which mortals embark upon courses that must needs lead to disaster, there may be pity when disaster duly supervenes, but not excuse. When, for instance, we turn to wrongful and unpermitted passion, such as the gruesome case to which we a moment ago alluded—will it be seriously maintained that there was never a moment when these two people could have stopped themselves before they were carried away by their unresisted impulses like stubble before the wind?

This is our thesis: that in wellnigh every normal life love should play not only a great but a glorious part, shedding a marvellous radiance over destinies in every other respect possibly obscure and unre-

markable; that instead of resigning ourselves, quite unnecessarily, to regarding love as an incalculable and ungovernable force, we can learn quite a good deal about its governance; that it is possible to be warned in advance against some of the snags and sunken reefs and perilous undercurrents to be encountered on this adventurous voyage; that by dint of clear-sightedness and honest purpose we really can steer clear of many of the worse troubles and trials of love, and achieve great and real happiness.

There are grievous mistakes to be made, blunders to fall into, not all of which we shall avoid—but at least we need not be habitual and unteachable blunderers. There are what George Meredith called "rides in the wrong direction"—but we may learn, and as a rule pretty speedily, when we are pursuing a mirage, and turn from a bootless quest. There are pains and disappointments in this enterprise as in all others, and few will escape the like altogether; but even such mischances as these may be turned to good account, by furnishing us with experience and serving as warnings. There is the love that kindles no response in the one who inspires it—the fair lady whom Colin sighs for may unaccountably but quite definitely have given her heart to Strephon—but such a wound is not incurable, though Colin may think so at the time.

And perhaps the greatest truth we have to learn is that he who would be a happy lover has to earn and deserve his happiness; that nothing worth having comes without strain and effort—certainly, it cannot be preserved without effort; that it is the striving and the sacrifice entailed in the quest of love

which give its savour to the prize, and enhance its worth.

We are convinced that the more truly happy lovers the world contains, the better a world this will be; to help on such a consummation will be the aim of the following pages—necessarily a mere brief introduction to a vast subject, but in its brevity, it may be hoped, not without interest and real value.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST STEPS IN LOVE.

"MAN that is born of woman " may or may not be " of few days and full of trouble "—he may carve out a conspicuous career for himself, or spend a monotonous lifetime in humdrum and drab surroundings, his name may be on all men's lips, or unknown beyond a tiny circle; but one thing is sure—he will carry with him all his days a perpetual reminder of his origin, in his need of woman, and dependence on woman.

We do not suggest for one moment that woman is complete without man, any more than man without woman; only there is that in man which causes him to reach out with a definite aim and consciousness for that satisfaction which only some woman can give him.

He may rebel against this dependence, set himself to prove that it is an illusion to which he can rise superior, join some community of voluntary celibates, who have forsworn association with womankind from some strange notion of holiness to be achieved by such segregation; nevertheless, his very withdrawal from the world in which he must daily meet women is in reality a flight, an avowal of weakness, an indirect admission that in an ordinary environment he would of a surety succumb to woman's power of attraction.

It would be interesting to ascertain from a sufficiently large number of men at what age they first felt strangely, mysteriously but unmistakably aware of this magnetism; but in the absence of precise data we will hazard the guess that in very many instances it is felt at a very tender age. Until not so very long ago, we know, it was usual to maintain—or at least to pretend—that children were blissfully unstirred, unconscious of sex until they crossed the physiological threshold of manhood and womanhood; but this was merely part of the great Victorian game of make-believe, the timid running away from inconvenient facts. We need not go to the opposite extreme represented by some of the disciples of Freud who see sex written across the earliest page of childhood; one may willingly assume that the case of the boyish Heine who on one well-authenticated occasion fell into a dead swoon under the stress of the sudden emotions aroused in him by the sight of a lovely maiden attests an exceptional precocity; yet if we consult our own memories quite honestly, we shall probably admit, at least to ourselves, that we have recollections of certain vague and confused stirrings of tenderness, of solicitude, evoked, "when we were very young," by some little playmate of the opposite sex. Queer, uncomprehended emotions which drew and kept drawing us in one particular direction, feelings unlike any we associated with children of our own half of humanity. And grown-ups making clumsy jokes, which even though we did not understand them struck us as peculiarly ugly and stupid—"Why, only look at them, they're sweethearts; you should watch them together,

it's as good as a play ! " It was far better than any play to the players, and infinitely more serious. . . .

The phenomena just referred to are particularly characteristic of the pre-adolescent stage, and may be observed in children just struggling with their alphabets. But with the onset of adolescence there comes a considerable change; the boys and girls are now apt to draw apart, to survey each other with critical and seemingly rather unfriendly glances, consciously aware that they are profoundly different from each other. This is the phase when boys will scornfully refer to girls as " soft " creatures, for whom they have no manner of use, while girls will state their conviction that boys are " horrid "—rough, dirty, uncouth.

But all this mutual criticism merely indicates the two sexes' growing interest in each other, their growing pre-occupation with each other. They are like actors who must presently act together on the same stage, and for the time being eye each other uneasily from the wings. And one fine day the hobbledohoy commences to take an unwonted interest in his appearance, brushes hair and clothes, leaves off some uncivilised habit or mode of speech—and the next thing is that we see him walking along some lane in shy but frightfully earnest conversation with a nowise remarkable girl whom he is evidently anxious to impress favourably. His fellow-cubs may chaff the life out of him, but they may as well spare their pains; he will not listen to them, he has made a new discovery, and will never be the same again. Let one of our poets sum it all up in four simple lines :

Oh, when I was in love with you,
Then I was clean and brave,
And miles around the wonder grew
How well I did behave. . . .

As a matter of fact, and smiling apart, this adolescent phase is one of profound stress and disturbance, of rather sudden physiological changes, of new and bewildering wants; it is a phase of intellectual and emotional unsettlement, during which the youth is immensely susceptible, for good or ill, to new impressions, new influences. The danger is that he may enter upon this stage of development—during which, to put it plainly, the fact of sex looms very large on his horizon—with notions on this subject not only very incomplete and distorted, but tinged with suggestions distinctly vile and degrading. Facts which are clean and beautiful in themselves, when rightly understood, may already have been presented to him as the subject for disgusting jokes, and the rising tide of manhood within him may have been sadly polluted by garbage from the gutter. Miss Rose Macaulay, laughing at the cant phrase which speaks of a certain time in a woman's life as "the dangerous age," has written a witty novel designed to show that as a matter of fact *all* ages are "Dangerous Ages;" none the less we are inclined to regard the age 'twixt boy and man as specially deserving of that name, because it is so specially suggestible and impressionable, with judgment as yet unformed, and feeling running in a spate.

We would say here with all earnestness that nothing disqualifies a man more fatally for ever being a really happy lover than the misfortune of having in

early life formed low and unclean ideas of sex. These ugly associations will cling with incredible tenacity, like slime, and even when washed away will leave indelible stains. One might wish that every youth, during this momentous epoch in his life, had some wise and understanding older friend, to explain to him, without "preachiness" or what boys call "pi-jaw," the true nature of the functions he will one day be called upon to exercise, and the urgent necessity of keeping not only his body but above all things his imagination unspotted and undefiled. Writing as we are for readers mostly young, we would beg all who wish to spare themselves unavailing bitter regrets in after-life to shun lewd conversations, erotic books and pictures, amusements calculated to stimulate appetites which it is of the utmost importance to keep in a subdued and quiescent state. To say nothing of the bondage of evil and destructive habits, one may well dread this Nemesis which waits on early impurity of mind—the inability ever to form a pure attachment into which some suggestion of sheer sensuality shall not intrude, a leering, unbidden guest, whose presence desecrates what should be holy. The supreme need of the growing youth is to have a high ideal of womanhood; and it is one of the most blessed effects of a good home-life, under the loving care of a true mother, that the boy who has been so brought up will tend, quite naturally and of his own accord, to reverence that womanhood which he has seen at its best and finest in his own "mater."

Of course, even the youth who has enjoyed these advantages, and who has of set purpose kept himself

clean in thought and act, will not escape his conflicts, or be without his share in the difficulties which belong to that transitional period; but there will be no irritant poison corrupting his thoughts, and the idea of love will present itself to him in a pure and beautiful guise.

It frequently happens that a young man of this mental and moral calibre will during those years be inspired to a deep and lovely affection by some gracious woman older than himself, to whom he may never avow his feelings, but who will exercise a guiding, restraining, elevating influence over him, an influence for which he will be permanently the better. Such was the experience recorded in his autobiography by that fine spirit, the late Dr. Boyd-Carpenter, who for so many years adorned the see of Ripon. His youthful love partook of the nature of worship—worship of what was pure and beautiful—and the lady to whom he paid it, though not destined to become his wife, had a good deal to do with shaping his character and touching it with her own admirable qualities. Very touching and tender is his tribute to her, written and given to the world in his old age; and who can doubt that, though these two in their relations to each other were not lovers in the sense in which the word is habitually used, he was yet a very happy lover, and one who assuredly had his reward? For we are ennobled by our own affections if they are bestowed on worthy objects; and this distinguished man certainly bore testimony to the power of “the eternal feminine” to “draw us upward.”

Let it be admitted that the phase of which we have been speaking in this chapter is a preparatory one only; it is not, for that reason, without deep significance, but rather the contrary. The man-to-be, or man-in-the-making, surveying life and the world from the precarious "angle of seventeen" or thereabouts, is as yet more or less what has been called "in love with love," rather than capable of that stronger emotion which centres with overwhelming force and intensity in one woman out of all the multitudes. But how he will face the more testing experiences life has in store for him within the next dozen years or so, will depend precisely on this period of preparation, which has already revealed to him, "as in a glass, darkly," some of the splendid possibilities love might hold for him. Let the worldly-wise make fun of these attachments of half-grown boys and girls not old enough as yet to know their minds—not having very much in the way of minds to know; to the seeing eye the spectacle they present, in their young innocence, their generous absorption in one another, is assuredly not laughable, but touched with a certain solemnity, to be likened to that of the opening bars of a prelude that will presently swell and broaden out into a fuller strain.

The prelude is a prophecy; and the key in which it is set is also the key to the future.

CHAPTER III.

THE "WHENCE?" OF LOVE: WITH SOME REFLECTIONS.

"You know love, same as you know whooping-cough, because there's nothing else like it."

YELLOWSANDS, by *Eden Philpotts*.

IN these words, placed in the mouth of a puzzled, half-angry rustic, the famous playwright expresses the bewilderment of many a more learned person than honest Joe Varwell, when in the throes of this unique passion. "I weren't born to go love-hunting," says Joe, ruefully. "I'm after something a good few sizes larger than love; and that's justice for the under-dogs. And meantime this silly mess have got into my mind." Joe can't account for it—nohow, he can't; he really wasn't like some others he could name in the village—like his cousin Arthur, for instance, always after girls and love; and now love has seemingly come after him, and got him, too—and where it came from is a mystery to him!

As we hinted, Joe is not by any means alone in his perplexity; and it is this ignorance which makes him and his like so helpless—this having no notion of the force that is playing upon him, playing with him, playing its own haunting, mocking, immortal tune through him. Joe Varwell would have done better to spare some of his time from revolutionary "literature" to study a little elementary physiology,

when he would have discovered the nature of this force, and the mechanism through which it operates—the mechanism which serves the preservation of the species, the handing on of the gift of life, the organs which make us respectively men and women.

Such knowledge, which is by no means "too wonderful for us," is really wellnigh indispensable for a right ordering of our lives, and quite indispensable for a more intelligent and less puzzle-headed attitude than Joe Varwell's towards love—the love between man and woman—which is always primarily connected with sex; for the sex-instinct and the love-instinct are as subtly commingled and welded together as body and soul.

That thoughtful and stimulating writer, Dr. Harold Dearden, states the exact truth when he names the sex-instinct "probably the strongest we possess," and expresses himself upon it as follows:

"The results of a bad technique in its use and control have very serious and very far-reaching effects on the health of the individual concerned." He might have gone further and said that ignorance of this vital subject is primarily responsible for a vast proportion of the unhappiness that darkens and spoils human love. Unfortunately, to quote Dr. Dearden again, "the subject as a whole is surrounded by an atmosphere of secrecy and false modesty, which tends to restrict the spread of such knowledge as is necessary if any successful technique is to be acquired"—or, we add, if love is to be less of a bewildering torment, a maze or labyrinth in whose convolutions men get lost.

A treatise like the present one, however, is not the place for instruction in elementary physiology, which may be found elsewhere. We must content ourselves with bidding the young man face, without futile squeamishness, the fundamental fact that the strange and sweet emotions which he sums together under the name of love have their origin in certain physiological processes which began to be active within him about the time when his voice broke, and various external changes made it clear that he had entered upon a new and significant stage.

These processes, carried on in the hidden laboratory of certain ductless glands, known as "gonads," and issuing in the secretion of the very essence of life—ever accumulating, ever seeking an outlet—awaken in him new and powerful urgencies; together with the instinctive knowledge that, just because he is now a man, he can find the satisfaction of his needs of body and soul only in woman. But for this activity, which he can as little stop as the beating of his heart, he would never know any of the longings, raptures, exaltations, joys, despairs, anxieties, self-tortures, ecstasies—all the myriad-hued strands which are woven together into the fabric of love. This contention is easily proved; for in those exceptional individuals who have not undergone the physical changes that occur normally at the time of puberty or adolescence, or who have lost the "gonads," nothing corresponding to the sentiment of love will be found.

At this point we can imagine an idealistic youth exclaiming angrily: "What? Am I to understand

that the very feelings which lift me to the stars are the outcome of obscure bodily processes, gland-secretions and the like, which I cannot control? Do you tell me that love is but a high-polite euphemism for what, at bottom, is merely the instinct I share with the brutes, and which searches blindly for its gratification? "

The answer is that the sex-instinct, which we do share with the brutes, is the soil from which springs the wondrous flower of human love, with all its fragrance, all its glory of form and colour; nor is the flower to be despised because of the soil in which it grew, and apart from which it could not have grown at all. That which in the lower creation remains blind appetite, reaching out blindly for its assuagement, in the mind of man becomes a new creation, is transformed and transfigured into spiritual beauty and significance, so that we may say, using the poet's words—

It has suffered a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.

But it is also true—and this must be firmly grasped and insisted upon—that what untempered youth deems deathless love is as a rule but a passing, though powerful, fancy, resting on nothing more than momentary physical attraction. Let it be remembered that, thanks to this ferment going on within him, the feeling of need and unsatisfaction to which it gives rise, the youth is *ready* for the emotional reaction, simply waiting for a suitable opportunity, for a person on whom to expend the potentialities of affection which have been growing and gathering force in the deeps of his being. It is

almost a matter of accident on whom his feeling shall alight; and the world of his friends may look on in wonderment, asking, "What did he see in her?"

He in the meantime will feel convinced that she is an exceptional, if not a unique, being, specially created for him, as he is for her; and while this is, no doubt, an illusion, it is a very happy illusion, and one would have to be of a singularly ungracious temperament to break in upon such a state with the harsh truth that, for one thing, they are both very ordinary young people, and, for another, that their mutual devotion, quite genuine at the time and for the time being, is not likely to stand the test of years, the test of use-and-wont, the test of tiffs and tempers. They will find all this out for themselves, and they will not be any the worse for the experience which each of us has to gain at first-hand.

It is not necessary to deny that there are those who have known only one love, and that a lifelong one; but it will be admitted that they form an exceedingly small category. There is not the slightest harm in Edwin and Angelina idealising each other, seeing qualities one in the other which no one else perceives; and years afterwards, if they should chance to meet again, long since married—he to another girl, she to another man—they will have sufficient good sense to think of their bygone sweetheartings with a kindly, indulgent tenderness, remembering that in those far-off days, if they were very foolish, they were also absurdly happy. Circumstances as a rule take care to bring these early court-

ships to a more or less speedy end; and no harm done on either side.

The intervention of commonsense, in the shape of counsel and warning, is called for only if our two young people should take it into their heads, on the strength of their mutually kindled feelings and longings, to contemplate marriage. There is every reason why they should do no such thing. They do not know themselves. They do not know each other. They do not know the world. If there is one thing certain, it is that within a few years they will have changed their outlook upon wellnigh every subject under the sun. She is the one and only girl whom he admires now, but so surely as he sees more of life and his fellows, she is not the type whom he would single out for his special admiration five years hence. Let us grant, for argument's sake, that he knows more or less what he wants in his sweetheart for the time being; but he has not the least idea of what he wants in a wife, because as yet he is not able to think of a wife, or of married life, but only of an unending honeymoon—an aspiration fortunately impossible of realisation.

There is a school of sentimental thinkers who regret that youthful lovers are as a rule unable to marry, for economic reasons; there are others who actually encourage such lovers to marry, economic reasons notwithstanding, and who sound the singularly foolish slogan, "Marry young!" We say that it is a fortunate and not an unfortunate circumstance that a young man, generally speaking, is not in a financial position to marry until he is approaching

his thirtieth year: "young" marriages mean thoughtless marriages, improvident marriages, marriages based on insufficient acquaintance; and while it is easy for the imagination to picture love as sufficient to make up for narrow means and to sweeten the bitterest struggle for existence, experience still bears out the realistic proverb which declares that when poverty enters the door, love is apt to fly out of the window. If there is fineness—*i.e.*, unselfishness—in a man's love, he will not ask a girl to share want or uncertainty with him.

Faced with this kind of reasoning, the young lover will probably suggest a long engagement as the alternative to early marriage: they will wait for each other, and when he is able to provide a home and home comforts, then, and not till then, they will marry. What if it should take three years, five years, or longer still? The time will soon pass, and is not paradise worth waiting for?

But this, too, will not do. He is assuming, without evidence—nay, in despite of overwhelming evidence to the contrary—that two quite young, immature or untried people can be sure in advance of the enduring nature of their feelings for one another. He is proposing to tie a girl for years ahead, asking her to limit—indeed, to surrender—her opportunities of finding happiness elsewhere. Because he very much wants her for himself, and cannot have her for an uncertain stretch of years to come, he will, so far as possible, make sure that no one else may have the chance of marrying her between now and then . . . whenever "then" may be. It does not strike one as a particularly chivalrous

arrangement; it would be unlikely to work if it were entered into; and we strongly advise against it.

A man should not think of marriage until he can see before him a near and certain prospect of being able to maintain a wife; and for the reasons stated, he should not suggest even an engagement, which is at least a formal, preliminary bond, until that prospect is sufficiently close and sufficiently definite. Let him be a lover, and a happy lover, at twenty; he will probably be out of love and in love again half a dozen times before he is fit to take that most serious step in his whole life, the entering into a contract intended to last as long as life itself.

We called this chapter, "The 'Whence' of Love—and Some Reflections," and we venture to think that the title has justified itself, even though we may seem to have been led into some digression. For when we understand how love arises, what is its physical origin, and how tremendously urgent is that sex-instinct which on the emotional side expresses itself in love, we shall readily acquiesce in youth gathering its passing happiness in those passing attachments where such happiness is meant to be gathered and worn like a garland; but we shall also agree that the time when impulse is strongest and judgment as yet unformed is not the time for taking fate-fraught decisions, and the shouldering of lifelong responsibilities.

The garland must not be allowed to become a fetter.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EVOLUTION OF LOVE.

" WELL, but," says the reader, " hold on a moment ! Are not the classic models of young love represented quite differently—sure of themselves and of the trustworthiness of their intuitions? Ferdinand and Miranda meet face to face on Prospero's isle—to see each other is to love, and that love is unclouded by doubt, without variableness or shadow of turning. Is all that picture imaginary? Or was it true of some past epoch, and if so, why should things be so very different now? "

These are very pertinent questions, to which we must attempt to supply an answer, though that answer will have to be brief.

Let it, then, be stated, frankly and explicitly, that while we are naturally prone to assume that so universal a feeling as love has remained unchanged in character through all generations, the truth is far otherwise; there has been a process of evolution at work, here as elsewhere, a progress from simplicity to complexity, and modern love is no more like that of Ferdinand and Miranda, and of many another couple, famous or obscure, than life in a modern city is like the far simpler existence men led before this bustling age.

Of course, even of old a man's first love was not necessarily the one which was destined to rule his whole existence; Romeo himself, when we first meet him, is in love with Rosaline—though he speedily

dismisses her from his thoughts once he has seen Juliet, whose exquisite beauty eclipses the lesser attractions of the lady at whose shrine he had previously worshipped.

But even so, having seen Juliet, and succumbed immediately to her charms, what did he know about her save that she was, to him, the loveliest creature drawing breath? "To him," be it understood—not to everybody else, or everybody else would have been as desperately in love with Lord Capulet's daughter! And yet, that single circumstance sufficed to make him her lover, and everybody agreed that this mutual attraction, this mutual appeal of youth and good looks, amply warranted Romeo and Juliet in getting immediately married; nay, the implicit belief is that, but for the sanguinary feud between their respective families, they would of a surety have lived happily ever after. Love such as theirs was enough, and nothing else was deemed to count.

As a matter of fact, this conception of what constitutes love—a magnetism resting almost exclusively on what may be called an æsthetic basis—maintained its sway for so long that even to-day we have not, in theory, quite escaped from it: so the youth be handsome, so the maiden be beauteous, what more natural than that they should love one another—and if they are in love, what is there for it but haste to the wedding with all convenient speed? In the old stories, which expressed the popular sentiment, she might be a princess and he a tinker—or he might be King Cophetua and she a beggar-maid; indeed, Eros was a god and Psyche a mortal, hated by Eros' divine mother, but love bridged all differences,

whether of rank or wealth or whatsoever kind. And to this day, do not simple hearts beat with pleasure when the newspapers announce the engagement of a duke's heir to a country vicar's daughter? "Ah, Love, the Leveller!" they say, delighted to think that even in our hard, sophisticated world romance is not dead. The match of a peer's son with a typist will never lack popularity—at least among the great public, whatever may be the feeling in the bridegroom's family circle.

This, then, is the traditional, classic type of love, resting on physical attraction and aiming—to be quite frank—simply at mutual possession; and we have no reason to doubt that from this mutual possession there often was born a deep and lasting tenderness and a sense that the united lovers really belonged to each other for good, to cherish and protect each other henceforth and ever after.

But this type of love could only exist, or persist, so long as the loved one's possession, in the elementary sense of the word, was the lover's whole desire—so long, that is to say, as the appeal was overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, to his sense of beauty. All that mattered to Pygmalion was that Galatea's marble should come to life—to thrilling, throbbing, sensuous life: what sort of mind and soul might dwell within her, was a question which did not so much as arise.

And again, this kind of love could content woman only so long as her mind, her individuality, were undeveloped, quiescent, dormant; so long as she had no desire to exercise her reason, to look beyond the *purdah*, to take a share in moulding her own destiny.

The Mirandas, the Juliets, the Desdemonas, are physically lovely, but intellectually null; the phrase which speaks of people as "having no mind of their own" describes them exactly. On those terms—terms which involved no clash of personalities, no divergence of opinions—love was simple and easy; and until almost the other day woman remained submissive, unquestioning, ignorant of all the issues that agitated the other sex, whose superiority was a fundamental assumption, a universal axiom.

But love is not so simple, nor so easy, when this unquestioning acceptance of the dogma of male superiority is once shaken, as it has been within the last couple of generations. When in Ibsen's epoch-making play, "A Doll's House" (1879), the fatuous Helmer said to Nora, "Above everything else, you are a wife," and Nora quietly answered, "*I don't believe that any longer—I believe that above everything else I am a human being—just like yourself,*" that rejoinder proclaimed the beginning of a new era. It announced a complete revision of the relations between men and women, and that revision has been in process of accomplishment ever since. Miranda to-day catches an early train to the City, where she earns a salary, or she attends College, with the view to adopting a profession; she is far from uncritical of Ferdinand, and by no means inclined to take her cue from him. She may love him and think him a dear, but without remotely regarding him as her superior in any single respect; she has no doubt that she can do what he can in wellnigh every sphere of activity; she may beat him in fair competition, in

study, even in sport; and thus inevitably her whole attitude in the matter of love has changed, and is to-day utterly unlike her grandmother's. It is not a case of Galatea's marble having become flesh, but of the flesh now being inhabited by a lively, challenging intelligence.

That is why the enterprise of love to-day, in this world of modern, self-reliant women, is far more complex than it was through the ages, until quite recent times; and that is why mere physical attraction, even though it be felt on both sides, no longer suffices to guarantee that our lover should be a happy lover. Beauty will always exercise its spell, but the love which derives solely from that spell will not endure. To give satisfaction, to promise anything like permanence, love must have a richer content nowadays; there must be a harmony of mind, a mutual understanding, a basal agreement on many questions, a similarity of outlook on life; for failing such harmony, there will be discord, failing agreement there will be friction, and the more romantic glamour fades, the more pronounced will these disharmonies and antagonisms become. Inexperienced youth may be convinced that love is all-sufficing; the truth is that love, as inexperienced youth conceives it—viz., sensuous passion—too often merely serves to hide and cover up for a time differences which tend to become ever more acute, ever more irreconcilable.

Thus our counsel to those who seek for happiness in love—and who does not?—is that they had best find an object of their affection with whom they already see eye to eye on a great variety of subjects. to whom they are mentally and spiritually akin—or,

to put it negatively, from whom they are not divided by an impassable gulf upon any vital question. It is an utter mistake to think that love will fill up such abysses; it is simply untrue that a brilliant, highly cultured man will achieve lasting happiness as the lover of a woman incapable of understanding or sharing his interests—each will fret and be fretted by the other. Again—there may be isolated instances of happy love where the man and the woman belonged to different races, or were members of different religions, or were sprung from different social grades; but these exceptions simply prove the rule, and the rule is otherwise. The mere fact that there are topics on which each feels strongly and diversely—so strongly and diversely that there must be a mutual agreement not to mention, far less to discuss them, lest there should be a conflagration—makes the chance of happiness too precarious. Some day, in an unguarded moment, a spark will set fire to a whole magazine of hidden resentment, and send the entire structure sky-high. “Of course, I always knew there was an Irish kink in you.” Or, “Of course, being a Jewess, you *could* not understand my point of view.” Or, “I might have known the plebeian in you would come out.”

No, decidedly, the happy lovers will in the overwhelming majority of instances be those who share the same nationality, the same social antecedents, the same outlook on matters of faith, the same intellectual level; and since both will speak, they had better speak the same language of the emotions, or there will be woeful misunderstandings. We repeat that so long as the woman's view did not matter, so

long as nine times out of ten she had no views, or accepted the belief that her part consisted in subordination, the quest of love was immeasurably less complicated, for it concerned itself with just one issue; but now love stands for something far more complex than in bygone times, and lovers must be drawn together by many things other than the elemental appeal of woman to the essential masculine, of man to the essential feminine. That appeal is, of course, indispensable; but it is also quite inadequate.

It is not at all uncommon, nor is it to be wondered at, that a man of brilliant parts should during an evening of relaxation immensely enjoy the charm which emanates like an intoxicating perfume from the presence of some girl whose loveliness of form and feature is her only asset; but if he becomes her lover, he will in an incredibly short time grow conscious of all that she fails to satisfy in him. A little longer, and he will be bored in her society; and love, which will survive many conflicts, fatally succumbs to boredom, and succumbs past resurrection.

Is successful love more difficult to achieve in the present age than in the past? We believe it is, because the standard has become a more exacting one. But for that very reason it is better worth achieving, and offers higher satisfactions than ever before, along with a higher incentive. Let the quest be embarked upon courageously, with open eyes and an alert intelligence, with worthy motives and enlightened aims; for he that seeks aright need not despair of finding his true and fitting love-mate, attuned in heart and mind and upward-striving soul.

CHAPTER V.

THE QUEST OF LOVE.

"HAPPINESS," runs a famous French epigram, "is not easy to come by; it is difficult to find in oneself, and impossible to find anywhere else."

While, in this form, the saying savours of deliberate paradox, it invites and deserves examination; and if we do examine it, we shall discover a core of solid truth underlying what seems at first sight the very glorification of egoism.

That truth is quite simply the undeniable one that no external conditions in and by themselves can make us happy unless there is something in us that can readily seize and use and turn them to account. For one thing, men vary extraordinarily in their capacity for happiness, some being actually too dull to experience any great exultation, be the occasion what it may; and, let us add, men vary no less in regard to their deserts, *i.e.*, their qualification for being happy.

This general reflection applies with quite particular force to the happiness or otherwise to be found in love.

Heine prefaces a celebrated chapter with the sentence: "She was lovable, and he loved her; but he was not lovable, and she loved him not." There, he says, was the whole tragedy—and certainly, a

great deal of tragedy is compressed within those few words, some of it avoidable, some probably not.

There are undoubtedly some men and women whom a niggard nature has not equipped with the qualities which inspire love, though these same unhappy individuals may have an intense longing for what cannot be theirs. For these we can only feel a sincere pity, and pass on. As it is, one more often feels wonder at some unlikely suitor's being accepted by his divinity than one would be to learn of his addresses being rejected. Explain it as we may, it undoubtedly does happen that a woman's love is won by the devotion of a man on whom no one would have imagined that she would bestow a second glance.

But, such exceptional cases apart, how is the lover's search for happiness to be taken in hand?

It might be thought the wisest plan for a man not yet very definitely in love, but recognising that love must play a principal part in his life, to begin by asking himself, "What precisely is it I seek in a woman?"

There is a time and a place for that query, but we would urge very strongly that it should be preceded by another, viz., "What precisely have I to *give*, to offer, to any woman whose love I may desire to win?"

Unless he is an almost inconceivable coxcomb, he is not likely to imagine that any girl whom he deigns to single out by his attention will be so intensely flattered by the fact of being made the object of his regard as to return it; anyhow, if he suffers from that delusion, he is likely to be cured of it pretty drastically.

But leaving the abnormally self-complacent male out of the question, we would yet utter the very emphatic warning that it is distinctly not enough for a man to be deeply, sincerely, even passionately in love with a girl: he has to be lovable, if he is to elicit love.

One thing which cannot be sufficiently impressed upon the reader is this: the typical girl of the period—meaning the best type, the type most worth winning—is apt to resent, rather than to feel flattered by, the “love” which is a tribute paid simply to her good looks and physical charms generally. This is the change of which we spoke in our previous chapter as having come over modern womanhood; for this very form of love amply satisfied Juliet and many another woman right down to within living memory, because it was the *only* kind they could inspire.

But the twentieth century girl, and more particularly the post-war girl, sets a different valuation upon herself, and has a right to do so, for she is a different creature from the helpless, useless, ignorant young gentlewoman of less than three generations ago. She is no less womanly than her predecessors; she is not deficient in vitality—her devotion to outdoor life and sport has increased her zest in living; but the idea of being appreciated, desired—“adored”—solely for her face and figure is apt to move her to a faint disgust rather than to any answering tenderness. “If *that* is all he can see in me . . .” she will say—and think the rest. Such love, she feels, is not good enough for her; she knows there is more in her than “that,” and the lover who stands the best chance of gaining her affection will

be the one who is capable of appreciating her along *all* lines, and not only along one. She would feel insulted to be called merely a "beauty;" not that she is indifferent to the question of her looks, but she is conscious—proudly conscious, maybe, and not without justification—of quite other qualities, and the admirer who seems more or less *unconscious* of these will plead his case in vain.

Which brings us back to the point with which we started this chapter, viz., the general observation that happiness depends, after all, upon something in the individual seeker after happiness; and our would-be happy lover must in these days be at least capable of admiring the woman to whom he feels drawn for other than solely æsthetic reasons—for her mind, her character, her manifold abilities. Since she would merely smile at the idea of recognising him as her superior, it is "up to him" to prove himself her equal, by showing that he sees more in her than the very charming young lady she undoubtedly is. And whether he is capable of that will of course depend upon the kind of man *he* is.

So much for a beginning; but of course it is a beginning only, though a very important one. The lady whom we imagine this suitor to view with tender regard seeks in her lover more than appreciation or admiration of her qualities; quite rightly and naturally she seeks for qualities in him which she, in her turn, can admire.

This, to be sure, dawns on our hero at an early stage; even a blunderer like Joe Varwell in *Yellow-sands*—to quote that amusing comedy again—says, "I well know that I'm not fine enough for a rare

piece like you," and straightway casts about for ways in which to render himself more attractive. How will he accomplish that end? One remembers the rather elephantine "ragging" to which his friends subject Benedick in the early stages of his conversion from the rôle of a woman-hater: "If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing old signs: 'a brushes his hat o' mornings; what should that bode? The barber's man hath been seen with him. When was he wont to wash his face? Nay, 'a rubs himself with civet: that's as much as to say, the sweet youth's in love."

All very well so far as it goes; his lady would rather see her admirer mannerly and exhibiting the outward signs of good taste and good breeding, no doubt. But what the tailor and the haberdasher and the hairdresser can do to render him more acceptable in her eyes, is as the small dust in the balance, compared with what he can and must do to improve himself; and, indeed, it is one of the peculiar virtues of love that it acts as a spur and incentive to self-improvement. No tale is so marvellous as that of the fine deeds men have done to win a woman's smile, to deserve a woman's favour. Again, then, it is something in the individual himself, rather than anything from outside, that alone can achieve happiness for him.

We advise the lover who would see his affection reciprocated to realise in the first place that every normal woman appreciates manliness, and that it is to this—not to the graces of the "lounge-lizard"—that he must aspire. The latter species, vapid in mind and weak as to the backbone, may smirk in

the graces of some kinds of women, but they are not the wholesome, vital, desirable kind. Let our lover make himself as fit a specimen of manhood, glowing with health, as he can, exercising and developing his physique, and he will be more likely to advance in the regard of modern womanhood than he of the flabby muscles, the slouching gait, the pallid complexion and lack-lustre eye. As for the effeminate man, the mollicoddle, the milksop—may Heaven have mercy on him, for women won't.

Let him show himself worthy of love by cultivating the qualities of character which inspire confidence and respect in the other sex. There are certain failings which no woman will forgive in a man, and which make her rule him out as a possible lover. Women are fairly severe critics of their own sex, and the complaint one most frequently hears from their lips is that of other women's "cattiness" and petty meanness; they prefer men, they say, just because they find them freer from those weaknesses—but *they will resent these same weaknesses tenfold if they meet them in a man*, and no man who shows a disposition to "cattiness" or petty spite need expect any but a cold welcome from a girl or woman worth her salt.

A word, and only a word, of warning on another point. Does the reader know that there is a kind of man from whom a wholesome girl instinctively averts her glance, whose slightest advances she immediately resents and repels, from whose touch she shrinks with a sense of revulsion? Something about him which she could not define or even name puts her on her guard; she "senses" that his attitude

towards womanhood is wrong, and will find ways and means of avoiding his presence. We need not go into details: he who would be a happy lover must not be "that sort of man." Is that plain enough? We hope it is.

He who would be loved, and experience the full happiness of a shared affection, must make himself lovable; he must train himself in habits of that unfeigned kindness which is something very different from ballroom manners, but shows itself in a thousand thoughtful and unselfish acts. Deep down in every woman, even in the most independent and used to fending for herself, there lives, unsuspected by herself perhaps, an appreciation of masculine chivalry, tactfulness, patience, sympathy, a true man's genuine desire to help and befriend; and again and again a girl has given her hand to that one out of a multitude of suitors who showed these attributes rather than the more brilliant surface graces. "No one would call my fiancé a beauty"—we quote from a typical letter—"but he is kind to everybody, unselfish to a degree, and beloved by all his patients." The kindly man, the man of clean mind and life, the man who inspires trust by the resolute, forthright way in which he faces life and work—he it is who, if his thoughts turn towards a girl in honest love, will stand a good chance of winning his prize.

We do not for a moment deny that a handsome scamp will many a time have his facile successes among the other sex, adding one conquest to another; but they will be shoddy conquests, shoddy successes, not worth the winning—dead-sea fruit that turns to dust and ashes in the mouth. Between such amorous

adventures and true love there is all the difference in the world; only the latter is capable of yielding happiness, which in the last resort waits on moral worth—and thus the happy lover must carry the ultimate source of happiness within himself.

CHAPTER VI.

THE QUEST OF LOVE—PART II.

WHEN a man has honestly asked himself, "What is there in me that I, as a lover, can offer, in order to prove myself worthy of love?"—then, and not till then, may he proceed to the further question, "What is it that I seek in a woman's love, to ensure mutual happiness?"

A very natural and a very important question; and yet, will it be believed that the average man does not ask it at all! He prefers, apparently, in a matter of the highest importance, to go sailing an ocean where not a few have made shipwreck, to drift on any chance current of passion, rather than consult chart or compass; he prefers to practise a lazy fatalism, based on the assumption that love is a thing one cannot help, lighting where it lists, and that the girl or woman who happens to arouse this emotion in him is of course the one whose love will confer happiness upon her swain.

"Which," in the austere and succinct language of Euclid, "is absurd."

We maintain that if so much love is *unhappy*, it is because it is so unreflective, because it amounts to nothing more than an almost automatic reaction to those characteristics which captivate the senses.

Men are an amazingly, a disappointingly, long time in getting past this elementary stage. Their love-poetry, e.g., still finds its main inspiration in woman's purely physical charms. With great respect for a supreme and philosophical poet like Browning, one cannot but feel astounded when one reads such lines as those in which Evelyn Hope's lover solemnly and fervently looks forward to the future life to reveal to him such important mysteries as why her hair had been amber-coloured, and her mouth "of her own geranium's red" !

If the thinker *par excellence* among modern poets can give expression to such thoughts, need we be surprised that the average man does not rise to a higher level, and associates love all but exclusively with the sensuous appeal of feminine beauty? He may, and does as a rule, invest his chosen divinity—by way of an afterthought—with all manner of noble and endearing qualities—often to the amazement or amusement of everybody else—but that merely means that he idealises her; it is not for these qualities that he has fallen in love with her, and when in course of time he discovers that they do not, in fact, exist, and that what he succumbed to was simply a pretty face, with nothing at the back of it, his dream of happiness will be likely to end rather abruptly.

We suggest, then, in all seriousness that the aspirant to happiness in love should frame and seek to answer the question, What are the attributes in a woman that would be most conducive to ensuring that aim? This chapter is written to help him in framing and answering that question; and if in doing so we

pronounce a variety of warnings, we hope to be rendering a much-needed service to not a few readers.

Physical beauty, needless to say, has a natural claim to be considered in this matter, but since there is not the least fear that it will ever secure *less* than its due meed of consideration, we need not spend many words in pleading a case that requires no advocate. It is that which makes woman most essentially and most obviously womanly which ever appeals to man most powerfully; which means, incidentally, that the futile imitation, by women, of the male figure—the deliberate “stamping-out of femininity”—was never anything but a deplorable folly, since men are so made as to prefer women to be women.

We would only urge the possibly unwary reader to make sure that the beauty which exercises its sway over him is real, natural beauty, and not a cunning effect produced by pretty dress and recourse to artifice. We would still more emphatically urge him to reserve his admiration for the beauty which goes with abounding health, rather than for the frail or drooping variety, because there is a real sense in which a certificate of health is tantamount to a certificate of good habits and even good character, while manufactured and purchased charms always seem to point in the opposite direction.

Woman's beauty is indeed a glorious and compelling gift; but how often has it been put to inglorious and degrading uses, and proved foolish man's undoing! And the average man had better recognise that in this respect he is peculiarly apt to

be foolish, that here lies his besetting weakness, that at this point he is specially liable to come to grief. If he realises this constitutional infirmity of his—humbly, vividly and frequently telling himself of it—then he may be sufficiently on the *qui vive* to withstand the lure of the baser type of womanhood; the type which deliberately flaunts its sex-appeal, deliberately uses its charm to arouse passion, and promises its dupe a very paradise of delights, only to compass his ruin. Such "malign beauty," as a poet calls it, has in every age been a chief agent of destruction: beauty of Delilah leading to the enslavement of Samson, who might have delivered his race; beauty of Helen, which laid waste the manhood of Greece and Troy; beauty of Circe, turning strong men into grovelling swine; beauty of the "strange woman" through whom, we read, "a man is brought to a piece of bread," and whose house is described as "the way to the grave, going down to the chambers of death."

There is also to be found, of course, a less dangerous but hardly less unlovely species, known in America as a "gold-digger," but not confined to the Western hemisphere—the girl who uses her attractiveness in a quite mercenary spirit for purposes of sheer exploitation, "trading" her agreeable society for what is known as a good time, with a shrewd eye for the highest bidder, who can take her to the costliest shows, provide the largest boxes of chocolates and the most exquisite perfumes, the man, in short, who is prepared to spend the most on her. It is a distasteful thing to have to say, but this species—referred to by the ancient writer as "the daughter

of the horse-leech, whose cry is 'Give, give'—seems to have multiplied of late years; her tastes are expensive, her methods totally unscrupulous, her aims quite definite, and since she is frigid at heart, she finds it easy to receive everything in return for nothing. It should be possible, after a sample or two of her tactics, for a man to determine whether a girl belongs to this venal category, and, having weighed her up, to retire from an unfruitful enterprise, which can never yield any happiness to the lover.

We need say little of yet a third allied species, the comparatively innocuous one of the flirt, who, without being mercenary, delights in promiscuous admiration, takes pleasure in receiving homage from all and sundry, has a succession of shallow "affairs," and is liberal in the distribution of her favours. She plays with men, greatly enjoying the game, and caring little if now and again one of her playthings receives rough usage; and on the whole one cannot spare much sympathy for those who allow themselves to afford her entertainment, for there is nothing underhand about her, and the lover who takes her seriously and feels bitterly hurt because her fancy proves fickle in his case as in the dozen which have preceded it, has only himself to blame.

Not to pursue this line of "negative recommendations," we would advise the potential lover whom we have in our thoughts—manly, sound in body and outlook, with some interest in the things of the mind, and the right stuff in the make-up of his character—to look out for the corresponding attributes in the girl in whose love he is to experience real happiness.

It is mere folly to say that he "cannot help" falling in love with this or that delightful young woman; he may not be able to help acknowledging her obvious attractions of form and feature, colouring and movement, set off to perfection in dainty and becoming garments, but from such spontaneous æsthetic appreciation to love there is a still good distance to traverse. If he is wise, he will traverse it slowly, and not in a flying leap, for the choice made in haste is too likely to have its usual sequel of repentance at leisure.

By all manner of means, let him use his eyes and his commonsense and ascertain whether to this charming exterior there corresponds a charming disposition; whether this vision of loveliness, as he sees her at a dance, a picnic, a garden party, is equally careful to keep herself fresh and good to look upon on ordinary occasions; whether that bewitching smile is the expression of an inner balance and serenity, or switched on and off according as the wearer wishes, or does not wish, to produce an effect; whether her interests are limited to shows and finery and the social gossip columns of the paper, or whether she is mentally eager and capable of serious thought; whether she is self-centred and consumed with personal vanity and rivalries, or ready to bestow unselfish sympathy; whether she has the dignity of womanhood, a talent for companionship, a sense of the value of money; whether, right at the heart of her, she is kindly and tolerant of human foibles and imperfections.

Are not all these and a number of other qualities and characteristics we might enumerate at least as important, at least as essential to the attainment of

happiness in love, as the amber hair and geranium-red lips of Browning's Evelyn Hope? Yes, and more so, we say; and he is but the dupe of his senses, who considers only the outward and passing appearance, and neglects the inner and abiding reality. The man who would love happily, must love wisely, and probe beneath the bright surface of good looks to the central depths of character.

We joined kindness and tolerance together as qualities of the highest importance in so close an association as love; for all lovers will from time to time have something to forgive each other—and it is the man who is likely to stand oftenest in need of forgiveness. A sulky, peevish, unforgiving temper will wreck any affection; and that especially where it goes together with a strong dose of self-righteousness, a rigid and narrow conception of goodness. The latter, indeed, is due, as often as not, to sheer ignorance of the world. "I was always afraid," says a character in a modern comedy to her sister, "you might have a difficulty in finding a suitable husband for Margery. She's so very good. And men don't like that. It frightens them." This is not really so cynical an observation as it sounds; the goodness which frightens men is a bleak and forbidding virtue, the result of a sunless training, full of repressions, void of humour, and abounding in variations upon the theme, "Thou shalt not."

A girl so brought up, quite "good" in her negative way, simply does not understand, and in the last resort does not wish to understand; she has no compassion on human frailties, but barricades herself behind her cast-iron principles, and thinks that

to descend from her precious pedestal is an act of betrayal. That is where the modern girl, who as a rule goes out into the world, earning her living, mixing with a great variety of people, seeing something of the realities of life, and adopting a less inelastic code, is likely to offer greater chances of happiness to the man who loves her and whom she loves, than the sheltered home-product of earlier ages. Yes, and her love, based on knowledge, not ignorance, of things as they are, and thereby rendered tolerant, is likely to be of a truer calibre than that of either the romantic or the puritan—both remote from the world of fact.

Kindliness is what matters most in love, for “Love is kind.” As the disappointed lover in Rupert Brooke’s poem says, in breaking away from an unhappy attachment :

“ And I shall find some girl perhaps,
And a better girl than you,
With eyes as wise, *but kindlier* . .
And I daresay she will do.”

Yes. We dare say she will do.

CHAPTER VII.

SOME PITFALLS OF LOVE.

WE will assume this chapter to be addressed to a reader who is nearing years of discretion and responsibility—the age when a man ought to begin to know his mind—and who should now be able to accomplish his quest for a love-mate successfully, *i.e.*, under the guidance of reason as well as instinct, with a sane regard to those qualities which truly constitute loveableness, as well as those to which we give the comprehensive name of charm.

Has such a one, then, reached his goal, and is he henceforth in a state of security, the possessor of a stable happiness, to be enjoyed without further care and vigilance?

It would be pleasant to be able to think so, but we fear that the facts are otherwise. We have all seen some seemingly prosperous and happy courtships come to grief, and the question is: What was the “snag,” what the pitfall, to which such a disastrous ending must be attributed?

There are, of course, many such pitfalls; in a brief chapter like the present one it will be possible to indicate only three or four among the number, to point to a few of the greater dangers which may turn love from a state of happiness into its opposite.

Love between man and woman, however sublime and touched with the breath of the spirit, is, as we have hinted, first and last a sex-relationship; there lies the potency of the sentiment, there lies its potential peril. Many men who have lived a blameless life in matters of sex do not know the strength of the passion that may be aroused in them; women as a rule have still less conception of the imperious nature of the sex instinct, and may in all sweet innocence permit their lovers seemingly slight privileges which serve to arouse and inflame that instinct till restraint becomes difficult, if not impossible. A healthy man, at the acme of his vigour, has a hard enough struggle to wage with the senses at any time; and when undergoing the full magnetism of his beloved's proximity, he may feel as it were an intoxicating fragrance emanating from her, and find himself assailed by elemental longings hard, indeed, to hold in check.

It is because we know such cases to be not infrequent—because we have received scores of confidences from men angrily ashamed of themselves, of their weakness, and of breaches of decorum they bitterly regret—that we want to utter a frank word of warning and advice. Writing, as we are, for men and to men, we would ask them to exercise a wholesome watch over themselves, and to check the first tendency to anything in the way of caress or endearment that goes beyond the limit which they well know they ought to observe. It is not wise for two young people, highly charged with vitality and emotion, and greatly attached to each other, to abandon themselves to prolonged and close embraces; the result can only

be to arouse passions which, in the man, lie but just beneath the surface, and which for the time being cannot be honourably satisfied. But passion so aroused is apt to sweep barrier after barrier away like a river in flood—and whatever the further consequences of such yielding may or may not be, there always follows a loss of respect and self-respect, a sense of failure, and even of mutual resentment. Something precious is gone, once for all, and the chalice of love henceforth holds a drop of bitterness. the taste of which will persist.

Only a sense of duty could induce us to touch upon this point at all; we would earnestly beg the reader to steer clear of this hidden snag—to avoid this pitfall.

We said that this chapter was addressed to a reader who had come somewhere near years of discretion—a little way past the irresponsibility of boyhood; but it is never safe to say that because a man is on the verge of thirty he is really fully grown up, and has put away childish things. Now we do not mind a certain degree of fickleness in a mere stripling, who as yet is merely playing with life, and we smile indulgently when we see him changing sweethearts with bewildering frequency, for how should a youngster just past twenty know what he wants—or be happy when he gets it? But the case is different after he has put on another half-dozen years; in the interval he ought to have ripened, grown a shade more serious, and if he still pursues a butterfly's uncertain course, sipping honey here and there as

momentary fancy may lead him, we shake our heads in justified disapproval.

It is sheer nonsense for him to plead that he is naturally inconstant, that he cannot help being what he is, that he "did not make himself." To this plea we would reply that he is exactly what he has made himself, by his frivolity, by his yielding to every passing fancy, by never trying to master this tendency, by never telling himself the plain truth—that his behaviour is not worthy of a grown man. Of course he could resist, but he does not choose to make the effort, finding it easier and more pleasant to pass from one fugitive attachment to another!

He should realise three things. In this gay career of his he may be amusing himself, but he is never touching the heights and depths of real happiness, which is something other than amusement. He never knows either the exaltation or the peace of a heart that is stayed on another heart in mutual trust and devotion. He never rises to the conception of loyalty to a chosen comrade, which holds a satisfaction no half-dozen flirtations and easy "conquests" can give.

In the second place, by not resisting his wayward impulses—as he might, if he started to take himself in hand at the first indication of yet another access of foolishness—he will surely in time forfeit the very capacity for such self-mastery; and this dissipation of his finest energies means an utter dissatisfaction. If he only knew it, he is preparing a dismal future for himself—he is throwing away the happiness which might be his, for the warning which Kipling places on the lips of his Don Juan of an old soldier—words

which we have quoted elsewhere—remain true :

“ The more you 'ave known o' the others,
The less will you settle to one.”

Lastly, if there is any man who provokes, and rightly receives, the contempt of his kind, it is the flirt grown old, still feigning a sprightliness that is a travesty of the real thing, still ogling the young girls who have no use for him, still paying foolish compliments or venturing on *propos galants* from which the hearers turn away in distaste. . . . Oh yes, he had been engaged, years ago, to ever such a nice girl; but she had enough, at last, of his escapades, and found for herself a steady, honourable man, who had the sense to give loyalty for loyalty, receiving love for love.

Love's happiness is endangered, and not seldom shattered, by the assumption of a domineering or proprietary temper on the part of a man such as no girl with a grain of spirit would at any time submit to, and to which the independent girl of our own period will give place—“ no, not for an hour ! ” It is a curious circumstance that some lovers, once they have been accepted by the one for whom they were sighing and suing very humbly not so long ago, change their tune and their manner completely, and treat the object of their affection henceforth as a possession with no rights of self-determination. Such a one will go on the assumption that his will, his good pleasure, are the paramount considerations; “ his ” young lady must take no step without his consent, and her arrangements are subject to his sanction. This is a curious reversion to type—the lord-and-

master of a bygone period—and that type is hopelessly out of date. Patient Griselda is scarcely the patron-saint of modern womanhood, and the man who is chained to this mediæval conception of the love-relationship will speedily discover that human doormats no longer abound in the fair sex.

In its intensest and most disastrous form this proprietary temper appears as a jealousy which may easily pass into an obsession—a real mania. Jealousy has been called the great passion of little souls, but we would rather call it the passion characteristic of the primitive and the imperfectly civilised, for whom love signifies exclusive possession in the crudest sense. Othello's was not a little soul, but he was primitive man; Desdemona was his "property," and he was everlastingly afraid of it being stolen from him, ever ready to listen to suggestions that a thief had broken into the enclosure—and thus, on the flimsiest evidence, he stupidly strangles his innocent, feather-pated wife. Such crimes of jealousy shock us every now and then, as when we read of some wretched, ill-conditioned youth taking a poor girl's life, just because he conceived, without a tittle of reason, that she had no right to go out or to dance with anyone but himself.

This is the idea of "property" in a human being carried to the extremest pitch; but even in its more ordinary manifestations there is hardly any passion capable of inflicting so much torture and self-torture on its victims. Well may the ancient writer—perhaps with a concrete case in his mind—sum up the matter by saying, "Wrath is cruel, and anger is

outrageous; but who is able to stand before jealousy?"

There is no arguing with this fixed idea, no way of proving it to be unfounded; just as there is no depth of espionage or personal indignity to which a person under its evil spell will not descend. The miserable excuse is sometimes tendered that jealousy is a proof, or even a natural accompaniment, of love; the truth is that it is love's ugly perversion and deadliest enemy. Let it be granted that the people who torment those whom they are supposed to hold dear are to be pitied: but what of those who are made to suffer by reason of these constant, degrading suspicions?

We suggest that the only wise attitude of a lover under normal circumstances is that of a large-hearted tolerance and trustfulness—confidence in the good sense and fundamental decency of his nearest, be she sweetheart or wife. To frown upon any other individual who may approach her, to grudge her a meed of innocent admiration, to stand, a threatening and forbidding presence, between her and any third person, is not only to play a very ridiculous rôle in the eyes of the world, but to alienate and in the end surely to destroy her affection. If, unfortunately, it is obvious to a lover that his trust has been abused, then it is plainly foolish on his part to try to obtain by any sort of compulsion what can only be yielded spontaneously. In such a case there has simply to be a clean cut, with as little in the way of recrimination as possible. But as a man cherishes his soul's peace and happiness, let him fight against any dis-

position to suspect the one whom he loves on slight grounds or on no grounds at all ; let him be sure that she will not easily nor always forgive successive and habitual aspersions on her honour and good faith.

If love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave : the pitiful and shameful grave in which love lies bleeding, disfigured and basely done to death.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GOAL OF LOVE.

IN the preceding chapters of this little book we may claim to have covered a large field, though inevitably we have done so only in cursory fashion. We have glanced at the origins—the lowly origins—of this uniquely powerful emotion, which more than any other is able to lift us to the highest heaven of felicity; we have spoken of love's evolution from a crude, primary appetite for possession to something far more subtle and complex; we have traced in outline love's quest for happiness, and indicated some of the dangers by which that quest is attended; and having done all this to the best of our ability within the limits imposed upon us by space, we have now reached the point where a reader may say, "Well, but after all, what is it all for? All this fuss and upset, all this fret and fever, this tremendous physio-psychical commotion—admitting that it can't be got rid of, isn't it more bother than it is worth? If we could eliminate this disturbing intruder from our lives, shouldn't we be better off, and manage our affairs more sanely? Once more, in the last resort, what's it all for?"

Our great dramatist, Mr. Bernard Shaw, has pretty consistently held the view that man's way to the mastery of his fate lies somehow through the

getting rid of this obstinate obsession created for him by the sex-instinct; as his Lady Cicely, in *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*, puts it: "I have never been in love with any real person; and I never shall. How could I manage people if I had that mad little bit of self left in me?" Now, it is possible to have a very great admiration for Mr. Shaw, and yet to feel that on this important matter he has strangely missed the truth. So far from love being merely a nuisance which it would be ever so much better to rule out from our scheme of things if only we could do so, it is—as we have stated in an earlier chapter—the motive power which has inspired innumerable worthy endeavours, and enabled men to overcome difficulties which would otherwise have crushed them. There is the very typical story of the candidate in the examination room, who was seen by the watchful examiner to fetch a piece of paper repeatedly and surreptitiously from his coat pocket, and to gaze at it intently for a moment or two in the intervals of writing his answers. It seemed a flagrant case of "cribbing," and the young man was sternly challenged to show the incriminating paper—which, when he produced it, with a blush of confusion, turned out to be a love-letter he had received that morning from his sweetheart, full of encouragement, bidding him have confidence in himself and do his best!

If anything is certain, it is that love has been among the chief incentives to honourable efforts, to deeds of chivalry and daring; the prize which has steeled the wills, doubled the energies, inspired the heroism of innumerable men, has been a woman's

approving smile, a woman's proud tenderness. How much of man's progress through the ages is attributable to this one impelling force, cannot be computed; but here at least is one answer, and not an ineffective one, to the question: "What is it all for?" Not only could we not banish the element of romance from our lives if we would, but we would not if we could; we have no desire to see existence reduced to a soullessly efficient mechanism, and are quite convinced that a world run on wholly unromantic lines would also be wholly unbearable to live in.

We have insisted again and again, with what our readers may have thought monotonous emphasis, that love is essentially a sex-relationship based on the sex instinct; but whereas the biological object of that instinct is simply the preservation of the species, man has made his own addition to nature's object, so that the love which is characteristic of civilised humanity differs from the crude primary sex-urge not less but more than the last triumphs of the rose-grower's care and ingenuity differ from the primitive wild rose. The physical want which might be satisfied with any member of the opposite sex has become a highly differentiated longing for one, and just one, such individual; a wonderful transformation, and assuredly pointing to a dynamic which bears the race onward and upward! In the biological scheme the sex-need is merely a means towards an end—procreation; in the human scheme the satisfaction of the love-need is an end in itself, ministering to human happiness, and producing a sense of fulfilment and realisation.

This sublimation of an instinct which, in its

original form, we share with the lower creatures—possessive and aiming consciously only at self-satisfaction—is one of the greatest achievements of mankind, making a definite line of demarcation; it is the means whereby man has steadily disciplined and raised himself in the scale of being, giving a more and more spiritual value and meaning to what for so many ages was purely on the physical plane. The mere capacity for such an emotion links us to a higher than animal order of existence, and confers a kind of patent of nobility; indeed, this is the truth of which every true lover has had glimpses—that, whether accepted or refused by the lady of his choice, to love her was itself a happy experience, which he would not for anything have missed or cancel from his memory. And when—as, again, every true lover does—we definitely prefer the well-being of another to our own, we have taken a long step forward. Love, then, stands justified, and more than justified, as the great civiliser, the great educator, of the race; it is the high school of manners, of self-subdual, of altruism, and has contributed immeasurably to the making of that fine product which we call a gentleman.

Nevertheless, while in one sense—and a very high sense—we may thus treat love as an end in itself, indicated as the inspirer of so much that is noble and beautiful in life and art, we shall not get away, being Nature's children, from Nature's deep and enduring purpose in implanting this powerful instinct within us; the life-transmitting, the race-preserving instinct, which will not be denied fulfil-

ment. Though individual lives may be impermanent as the ripples on the surface of the river, Life itself desires to live on, a stream which still continues to flow.

And thus, wherever there are happy lovers—wherever there are a man and a woman who believe, rightly or wrongly, wisely or unwisely, that they can find utter and complete happiness in each other—they will desire to make that happiness a lasting one by throwing in their lot together in a life-long union. Such a purpose, again, rightly and seriously embraced, acts as a spur to young ambition and industry—for we assume that we are dealing with two people not entirely light-minded and content to take the most important step in their lives without some thought for the future; before they can found a home, there will have to be on the man's part a concentrated endeavour to obtain an economically assured position, on the woman's part much preparation and training for the new duties which will fall to her share; probably both will begin to exercise thrift, and deny themselves a number of passing gratifications, with a view to providing future comfort and a sound foundation for their joint enterprise. How prosaic sound these preliminary measures, this gathering of gear, choice of household goods, purchase of this or that major article of furniture out of money laboriously saved! Yet more poetry goes into these shopping expeditions by engaged couples, these excited raids on this warehouse and that emporium, than you will find in whole volumes of sonnets, and a deeper and more sacred joy informs the two youthful principals in the drama than they

either knew or guessed in the most romantic days of their early courtship.

Those cynics who say that marriage and romance are incompatibles, or that the marriage bell is the passing bell of romantic love, merely expose their own paltry, shoddy conception of romance, by which they mean—to put it plainly—amorous dalliance. They have no conception of that finer, truer romance of married lovers who share not only common delights, but common tasks and even common sorrows, all of which serve to draw them more closely together, so that their being becomes completed and “far more deeply interfused” than they could have guessed in the hey-day of youth. And in the shared joys and responsibilities of parenthood they experience a new hallowing of their happiness, a new sense of fulfilment, and withal of the dignity of love come to its fruition.

This, which we may call, using Edward Carpenter's happy phrase, “Love's Coming of Age,” does not by any means imply that the old fervour, the old magic, has departed, that the magnetism of which each felt so intensely conscious before the first avowal has now become a thing of the dim past. Not so, but for many years to come they may remain lovers still, turning to each other with the same mutual need, satisfied only to be renewed; and they will see each other, not as others may see them, with the passing years leaving their marks on brow and hair, but as they looked to each other when they walked along quiet lanes, their voices hushed, and their eyes aglow with things unspoken.

And when, in course of time, they enter upon age, and the physical element in their love shrinks and fades, the spiritual and indestructible element will only stand the more serenely and beautifully revealed, like the perfect temple raised by the architect, when the scaffolding falls. Here is, indeed, a building not made with hands, indestructible, not destined to pass away; it was for this they met and loved, and here—in the perfecting of two human souls—is seen the goal of love.

Such thoughts take us beyond the strict scope of this manual; for our task has been concluded when we have brought the lover to the threshold of that richer, fuller experience which awaits him in marriage. That subject we have sought to treat elsewhere, in the other books which form part of this series; here we will only, in bidding farewell to the reader who has followed us so far, make our concluding words those of Browning's Ben Ezra, so peculiarly applicable to youthful lovers :

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made;
Our times are in His hand
Who saith: "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God; see all nor be afraid!"

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